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TAGS: [AMGT](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH GUINEA-BISSAU  
AMBASSADOR TO THE GAMBIA AS BISSAUN CHIEF OF  
DEFENSE VISITS

Classified By: Ambassador Barry L. Wells for reasons  
1.4 (a) (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Ambassador called on Guinea-Bissau Ambassador to the Gambia Munira Ribeiro following assassination of the President and Military Chief of Staff in Bissau. Ambassador Ribeiro expressed little hope for a quick resolution to the current crisis in Guinea-Bissau. Meanwhile, Embassy sources report that Guinea-Bissau Chief of Defense Staff Induta is visiting The Gambia.

In the Mood for Misery  
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¶2. (C) Ambassador Wells called on Ambassador Ribeiro to express condolences to her and her country following the assassinations of the President and military chief of staff. Usually upbeat and positive, Ambassador Ribeiro was visibly distraught and tense throughout the brief meeting. She commented that her health was affected and that her blood pressure was quite high requiring medication. She apologized for not honoring an invitation to a cultural event at the EMR, saying she was in "no mood for music". She lamented that drugs "have ruined my country and everybody is involved". She expressed appreciation for US continuing efforts to combat drug trafficking in the region, but was pessimistic about solving the problem in Guinea-Bissau in the near term.

The Gambian Connection: Old Players - New Game  
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¶3. (C) Ribeiro expressed concern that Former Chief of Navy Staff Na'Tchuto, currently in The Gambia under "house arrest" would be allowed to return to Guinea-Bissau as he was deeply involved in the drug trade. (Comment: Na'Tchuto who was also allegedly involved in the aborted coup attempt in Bissau in November, 2008 is being kept under close surveillance by Gambian authorities. President Jammeh commented to US Ambassador that he was asked to "keep" Na'Tchuto and would not release him except to another ECOWAS country).

¶4. (SBU) LES contact reports that the Chief of Defense Staff from Guinea-Bissau arrived in The Gambia on 3/26. He was met by his Gambian counterpart Brig. Gen. Tamba, Inspector General of Police Ensa Badjie and Director General of the Gambian Immigration Service, Sacko Drammeh. Presence of Drammeh at the meeting raises the possibility of discussions on the status of Na'Tchuto, as well as that of former president of Guinea-Bissau, Kumba Yalla, whose presence in The Gambia was also recently confirmed.

COMMENT

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15. (C) Ambassador Ribeiro's distress confirms other assessments of the current situation in Guinea-Bissau. Visit by the Guinea-Bissau military and presence of other dubious players bears watching as the possibility of shifting the drug marketplace looms large. Jammeh on the other hand, may be reaching out to Guinea-Bissau to strengthen his hand as a lead player in sub-regional politics.

WELLS